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## **BUS FIRE SAFETY SHOULD BE “MANDATED ACROSS THE BOARD”.**

In a recent radio interview in Dubai, Mark Cavanaugh, CEO and President of Firetrace International argued passionately that automatic fire extinguishing should be compulsory for all buses – particularly school buses – not just in Dubai and the other Emirates, but globally. Acknowledging and applauding Dubai’s School Transport Manual that makes such systems obligatory on school buses built after 2008, his conviction is that this requirement needs to be extended to all busses to safeguard passengers.

Mr Cavanaugh was on-air during a recent visit to the UAE and was invited to give an expert view and global perspective on school bus safety. His Arizona-based company is acknowledged to be the world’s leading provider of bus and commercial vehicle fire protection systems and a supplier to leading bus manufactures around the world, including those based in the UAE.

During the prime-time interview he told how, when it comes to installing fire suppression in buses there is: “...nothing really standard universally across the board. People tend to do different things in different regions, different countries, even in different municipalities.” He went on to express the view that without fire suppression achieving: “...truly compulsory mandatory legislation across the board...” the situation is likely to continue where some buses have fire suppression and some do not.

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The frustration is, he said, that: "...retrofitting is where the fire suppression really comes in, because it has no impact on any of the features of the bus and does not (like many safety features) have to be built into the initial design of the bus." In answer to the inevitable question from the interviewer as to why all bus operators do not fit fire suppression, he replied that while a bus without fire suppression was not as safe as a bus equipped with a system designed, manufactured and installed to the highest international standards, the operator's costs, operating ratios and margins are lower. Hence, Mr Cavanaugh's view that making fire suppression compulsory is the only across-the-board solution. He added: "...unless it is mandated, nine times out of ten operators won't install the extra safety standards."

Asked about his experience of fire suppression in school buses in the USA, Mr Cavanaugh lamented that there was: "...not one specific standard in the bus industry" and that he: "...spends a lot of time on Capitol Hill dealing with congressmen and senators trying to educate them on what to do with these safety features in the transportation market" in his company's quest to get fire suppression required in buses across the nation.

He told how the USA's Department of Transportation is looking at demanding, for example, rear back-up cameras on all passenger vehicles. His view though is that while rear back-up cameras are an excellent safety feature, the number of bus fire deaths each year in the USA is far greater and so fire suppression should be a higher priority for legislation. He added: "We are looking at doing some things where there is engine and dashboard fire suppression, as well as fuel tank fire suppression, which is another technology that we have."

Mr Cavanaugh regretted that fire safety measures are so frequently accident-led. He

concluded: “A lot of the time when it comes to safety it is something that has to be mandated. Unfortunately it is when a horrible accident has happened or a number of horrible accidents have occurred.”

ISO 9001:2008-certified Firetrace International’s dedicated Middle East operation, Firetrace International (Middle East) LLC, is based in Dubai and can be reached on +97 1567 599490. The company is headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona, with its EMEA offices in the UK. Further information is available by contacting Firetrace International at [info@firetrace.com](mailto:info@firetrace.com). The company’s recently redesigned website is at [www.firetrace.com](http://www.firetrace.com).

**END**

**CAPTION:** Mark Cavanaugh, CEO and President of Firetrace International: “Bus fire suppression should be truly mandated across the board.”

**EDITOR’S NOTES:**

1. The interview referred to in this press release was on Dubai Eye 103.8’s Drive Live radio show on 21<sup>st</sup> May. The interviewer was the show’s co-host, Tim Elliott.
2. To download this release and a high-resolution version of the photograph, to download other Firetrace International press releases, or to select any other releases from the company’s NewsManager, please go to FireBrand Communications International NewsDesk website at: <http://www.firebrand-comms.com/news/client/press/2>.

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